



*Washington, D.C.*—If a PO2 ever gets locked out of his house again, he'll probably handle the situation differently. He was cooking when he got locked out the first time and decided the best way to get back in was to break a window. He found a rock and, instead of throwing it through the rear-door glass, started tapping on it.

After increasing the strength of his tapping, the glass finally gave way, but the PO2's hand went through the broken glass. He cut his hand between the thumb and forefinger, as well as his wrist. He also suffered tendon and nerve damage, which required surgery.

No permanent disability is expected, but the victim will need up to seven months of physical therapy to regain full use of his hand. A

*Mayport, Fla.*—A Coast Guard seaman apprentice was skateboarding when he lost his balance and fell, landing on his forearm and twisting his elbow. He spent seven days on limited duty for a sprained elbow. A

*Norfolk, Va.*—Do you know how it feels to stick a knife in your eye? A PO2 does. He was using a 4-inch, folding, lockable knife to remove a large tie that was holding the restraining strap to the back of a child's car seat. He was pulling the knife toward himself when it suddenly slipped.

The PO2 stabbed himself in the right eye. The blade punctured his lower eyelid and went into the eye globe. A surgeon repaired the damage during a two-day stay in a hospital. The victim also faces two weeks of limited duty and further treatment by an ophthalmologist. A

*Guantanamo Bay, Cuba*—"If only I had worn protective gear." That's probably what a Coast Guard seaman apprentice was saying after he broke his left wrist. He was roller-blading on some skating ramps when he fell backward. Doctors put his wrist in a cast and sent him to home port. They said he wouldn't be fit for sea duty for six to eight weeks. A


*Olala, Wash.*—It was supposed to be a simple job: Burn spare scraps of lumber in a 3-foot-diameter bonfire in the backyard. Everything was OK until the PO2 doing the burning started walking around the edge of the fire, tripped and fell hands-first into the outer edge. He immediately rolled out but still suffered second-degree burns on both hands.

After soaking his hands in ice water for 15 minutes, the victim went to sleep, and, when he awoke the next morning, his hands were swollen and blistered. His wife drove him to work, where a ship's corpsman evaluated his burns and sent him to a hospital's emergency room. Doctors treated him for second-degree burns and released him the same day. However, he spent 12 days on convalescent leave. A


*Guantanamo Bay, Cuba*—Three Coast Guard shipmates rented a speedboat from the MWR marina and went water-skiing. The driver of the boat was bringing the boat around so the shipmate in the water could reach the towline. In reality, however, the shipmate already had the towline in his hand below water and was trying to untangle a knot.


When the driver took off, two of the skier's fingers got caught in the line, breaking them. He had to fly back to home port for surgery. A

*Yokosuka, Japan*—An ensign fell asleep on his couch one evening and awoke the next morning with two small bites on top of his left foot. The area around the bites was swollen, and the swelling continued into the third day, when the ensign finally went to sick call. A duty corpsman diagnosed him with a possible spider bite, gave him antibiotics, and told him to stay off his foot.


On the fourth day, the victim's foot still was swelling, so he checked into a base hospital, where he had surgery to remove dead skin caused by the bites. Medical findings revealed the spider could have been a brown recluse. The victim spent 17 days on convalescent leave and had his house fumigated to prevent a recurrence. 

*Patuxent River, Md.*—If you don't think ORM applies to off-duty events, think again. An SCPO was trying to get off the roof of his house when the ladder he was using slid to one side, causing him to lose his balance and fall. He landed on his back and suffered a compressed fracture of two vertebrae. He lost 30 workdays.


If this victim had followed precautions for the job he was doing, applied the principles of risk management, and used the two-man rule, this mishap probably wouldn't have occurred. 

*Southwick, Mass.*—A mountain-biking venture while on liberty landed a Coast Guard PO3 in a hospital with an injured shoulder, two broken ribs, and multiple cuts and bruises. As the victim will tell you now, it pays to know the surrounding terrain when mountain biking. He didn't, and it caused him to overshoot the landing area. Doctors initially put him on five days SIQ and 30 days of light duty, pending the results of an MRI for his left shoulder. 

*Mayport, Fla.*—It's OK to be macho, but be careful how far you take it. A PO3 and his wife had ended a fishing trip to the local jetties and were starting back to their truck. He grabbed all the gear, which included a bait bucket, a tackle box, and three fishing rods. That left his wife to carry only a six-pack of soda.

As the PO3 was making his way over the rocks, one of them slipped from under him, and his foot caught between two rocks. He fell down but got back up and walked on to the truck. When he got home, he put ice on his swollen ankle, thinking he only had sprained it. The next morning, though, it still was swollen, so he went to a medical clinic for an X-ray, which revealed his ankle was broken. He lost 45 workdays. 

*Portsmouth, Va.*—A seaman and four shipmates were playing basketball at a base gym. One of the shipmates threw a long pass, and, as the seaman tried to catch it, he collided with another player. He heard a snapping sound and couldn't stand on one foot.

The shipmates took the seaman to a naval hospital, where doctors diagnosed him with a broken fibula. He will wear a cast on the foot for six to eight weeks. 

*Sasebo, Japan*—Shortcuts rarely work, as a PO2 found out while riding a bicycle to his off-base quarters one evening at 2200. He tried to cut across the parking lot of a gas station and ran into a chain that had been strung across the entrance. He flipped over the handlebars and landed in the parking lot, knocking himself out.

When the PO2 first came to, he didn't know his whereabouts or what his name was until he looked at his ID card. He then went to another service station that was open next door and asked for help. The operator called the military police, who summoned an ambulance to take the victim to a local hospital.

Doctors treated the PO2 for a slight concussion and a small amount of brain swelling. He was SIQ for five days and spent another 10 on light duty. 